

## ***Balclutha* Stop**

### **#20 Charting a Musical Course Through Maritime History**

We are anchored in maritime history through music and song, an integral part of life at sea. Intrepid sailors sang all day to sustain themselves at sea – their songs today, a musical porthole into maritime history.

For the ordinary sailor on a 19<sup>th</sup> century deepwater ship, work was grueling and dangerous. Songs were key to survival for sailors who were permitted to sing while they worked, but not allowed to talk. Sea chanteys – believed to be from the French chanter, to sing – were traditional work songs sung by sailors to lift their spirits and to maintain rhythm, essential for working as a team.

*The winds wuz foul, all work, no play,  
Leave her Johnny leave her,  
To Liverpool Docks from 'Frisco Bay,  
And it's time for us to leave her.*

*The grub wuz bad an' the wages low,  
Leave her Johnny leave her,  
But now once more ashore we'll go,  
And it's time for us to leave her.*

Created by sailors, chantey lyrics are first hand accounts of shipboard life. Through chanteys, sailors could air grievances that they could not otherwise voice. A vital source of historical information, the songs of mariners' lives, dreams, and universal human emotions transport us to another place and time.

Sing the old songs with us aboard *Balclutha* while raising a sail, or turning the capstan or heavy bilge pump. Feel a visceral connection to history through your tired shoulders! Or join us for our free, evening sea chantey singalong aboard *Balclutha* the first Saturday of each month. High seas and harrowing Cape Horn passages come to life as we sing from 8 p.m. to midnight.

San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park preserves our maritime heritage through the rich and varied music of the sea. This ensures present and future generations can maintain a connection, a mooring, to their maritime past.